

**Board of County Commissioners
Leon County, Florida**

**Workshop on
Evaluation of Increased Rural Densities
within District One**

**1:30 to 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, April 10, 2007**

**Leon County Board of County Commissioner Chambers
Leon County Courthouse, 5th Floor**

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Board of County Commissioners

Workshop Item

Date of Meeting: April 10, 2007

Date Submitted: April 4, 2007

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Parwez Alam, County Administrator
Vincent S. Long, Deputy County Administrator
Wayne Tedder, Director of the Planning Department

Subject: Evaluation of Increased Rural Densities within District One

Statement of Issue:

This agenda request is for the Board to re-evaluate the allowable densities within the Rural Future Land Use Map category located within District One.

Background:

This workshop is being conducted at the request of the Board to consider increased densities within the Rural areas of District One.

Analysis:

The proposal would increase the allowable densities within the Rural Future Land Use Map category located within District One from one unit per ten acres to one unit per three acres. The proposed density would yield an additional 6,267 units above the currently allowable 2,403 units for a total of 8,703 units on approximately 43,214 acres of land. A report using a Power Point presentation will be made during the workshop. This report provides information on the following discussion items related to the proposed increase in density:

- Infrastructure availability:
 - Central sewer is not currently available nor will it be financially feasible at a density of one unit per three acres. Retrofit of existing septic tanks to a central system at this density would be extremely expensive.
 - Advanced on-site system technology is currently readily capable of delivering systems that release approximately 10 mg/L Nitrogen. Current research shows that the Springs function best at less than 1 mg/L Nitrogen. The City is currently working on a six year plan to get central treatment facilities down to 3 mg/L Nitrogen release.
 - Transportation infrastructure is also lacking. Currently Woodville Highway is operating at LOS F and the proposed amendment is

anticipated to reduce Old Plank Road and Natural Bridge Road from an operating LOS C down to E

- Environmental constraints:
 - These lands are located within the Wakulla Springs Springshed.
 - 11,616 acres are environmentally constrained (conservative estimate), about 60%
 - 7,126 acres are within the 100 year floodplain
- Residential needs over the Comprehensive Plan's timeframe:
 - Current analysis does not demonstrate the need for this additional density to accommodate expected 2030 projected population growth.
 - Residential developments at a density of one dwelling unit per three acres with advanced on site systems are not anticipated to be more affordable or "inclusionary".
- State agency review of other planning initiatives and major developments:
 - The proposed amendment could prove deleterious to other projects currently undergoing state agency review such as the Capital Circle Office Complex, the Southside Development of Regional Impact, and the Evaluation and Appraisal Report. At a minimum, future Comprehensive Plan amendment would be scrutinized based on needs more closely.
- Current Comprehensive Plan policy and direction:
 - The current Comprehensive Plan's policies, including those related to the Urban Services Area, the Southern Strategy Area and environmental protection would require amendment as these policies may be inconsistent with the proposed amendment.
 - The proposed amendment would create development potential that could effect demand within the Urban Services Area and the Southern Strategy area, resulting in less redevelopment and new development within these areas.
 - Further, the current Comprehensive Plan provides hardship relief for long time property owners (Policy 2.1.9) and for property owners desiring to subdivide their property for family members. In these circumstances, two dwelling units per acre are already permitted.

The amendment may also be premature due to several other studies and initiatives currently underway including the Infrastructure Phasing Report, the Leon Aquifer Vulnerability Assessment, and the Sewer Master Plan Update. The amendment is also inconsistent with the Woodville Recharge Basin Aquifer Protection Study that recommends central sewer accommodation first and foremost. For this reason and the reasons outlined above, staff recommends not initiating a Comprehensive Plan amendment to increase densities within the District One Rural lands in the upcoming 2007-1 amendment cycle.

Options:

1. Accept staff report.
2. Do not initiate a Cycle 2007-2 amendment that would increase the densities allowed in the Rural Future Land Use Map category located within District One.
3. Initiate a Cycle 2007-2 amendment that would increase the densities allowed in the Rural Future Land Use Map category located within District One.
4. Board direction.

Recommendation:

Options #1 and #2.

PA/VSL/WT/KA